



PRESS RELEASE

05-006

Date: Thursday, January 6, 2005
District: 8- Riverside County
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATE ROUTE 243 CLOSED FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS

IDYLLWILD- State Route 243 will remain closed for approximately two weeks to facilitate emergency repairs to the roadway. Three large boulders and debris fell from the adjacent mountainside blocking SR-243. A full closure is in effect between Poppet Flats to the north and Alandale to the south. Changeable message signs have been positioned at the bottom of SR-243 in Banning and on SR-243 in Idyllwild advising motorists of the closure.

Emergency funds of \$200,000 have been allocated to repair the roadway. Yeager-Skanska, Inc. has been awarded the emergency contract and repairs are underway. The three larger boulders will be broken apart using a hydraulic breaker. Debris will be loaded onto dump trucks with skip loaders and removed from the mountain. Heavy equipment will be traveling SR-243 from Poppet Flats to Banning. Expect delays due to slow moving vehicles. The extent of damage and necessary repairs will be assessed once all debris has been removed. A survey of the adjacent mountainside will be made to determine if other unstable rock formations must be removed in the interest of public safety.

Caltrans advises that access will be restricted to local residents with proof of residency. Only local residents and emergency personnel will be permitted beyond the barricades. Flagmen will be onsite at the north and south barricades of the closure controlling access. The shoulders within the limits of the closure are temporarily designated as "No Parking/Tow Away Zones." This ordinance applies to **ALL** unauthorized vehicles, local residents included. The California Highway Patrol will enforce the no parking statute and arrange for the removal of illegally parked vehicles.





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Given the extent of damage to the roadway, and the fact that this is an active rock slide area, casual observers will not be permitted within the boundaries of the closure.

ALTERNATE ROUTES

Caltrans recommends that motorists use alternate routes to reach the Idyllwild/Mountain Center area.

- East/West- Use State Route 74 from Hemet or Palm Desert to SR-243 to Idyllwild.
- North/South- Use State Route 79 from Temecula or Beaumont. Connect with SR-74 east in Hemet and subsequently SR-243 to Idyllwild.

Your patience and cooperation are appreciated during this emergency repair project. Caltrans advises drivers to stay alert, drive smart and always- SLOW FOR THE CONE ZONE.

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